

## Editorial Department.

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### MR. MALLOCK'S MISSING SCIENCE.\*

THE study of the abnormal postulates a knowledge of the normal. Since Mr. Mallock has discovered a "missing science," we feel in duty bound to present his discovery to our readers, in order that deviations from the standard may be recorded by the psychiatrist.

Before criticising Mr. Mallock's little essay, we will try to give our readers some idea of what it is about. The author begins with an analysis of the aims, the principles, and the "pseudo-science" of modern Democracy. Having established the evil and destructive character of these things, he sets himself to show by logical argument, that the present state of social inequality, which Democrats wish to disturb, is a natural and wholesome state ; that the continuance of civilization is dependent upon it ; and that it could only be overturned by effecting a radical change—not in human institutions, but in human character. The desire for inequality is inherent in the human character ; and in order to prove this statement, Mr. Mallock proceeds to affirm that there is such a thing as a science of human character ; that of this science he is the discoverer ; and that the application of this science to the question at issue will demonstrate the integrity of Mr. Mallock's views, and the infirmity of all others. In the ensuing chapters the application is made, and at the end the truth of the proposition is declared established.

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\* "Social Equality, a Short Study in a Missing Science." By W. H. Mallock. (New York : Putnam's.)

This is the outline ; but let us note some of the details. Mr. Mallock asserts (Chap. I.) that the aim of modern Democracy is to overturn "all that has hitherto been connected with high-breding, or with personal culture" ; and that "to call the Democrats a set of thieves and confiscators is merely to apply names to them which they have no wish to repudiate." He maintains (Chap. II.) that the first and foremost of the Democratic principles is, "that the perfection of society involves social equality" ; and that "the luxury of one man means the deprivation of another." He credits the Democrats with arguing that "the means of producing equality are a series of changes in existing institutions" ; that "by changing the institutions of a society we are able to change its structure" ; that "the cause of the distribution of wealth" is "laws and forms of government" ; and that "the wealthy classes, as such, are connected with wealth in no other way but as the accidental appropriators of it." In his third chapter he tells us that "the entire theory of modern Democracy . . . depends on the doctrine that the cause of wealth is labor" ; that Democrats believe we "may count on a man to labor, just as surely as we may count on a man to eat" ; that "the man who does not labor is supported by the man who does" ; and that the pseudo-science of modern Democracy "starts with the conception of man as containing in himself a natural tendency to labor." And here Mr. Mallock's statement of his opponent's position ends.

In the fourth chapter we are brought within sight of "The Missing Substitute." "A man's character," we are told, "divides into his desires on the one hand, and his capacities on the other" ; and it is observed that "various as are men's desires and capacities, yet if talent and ambition commanded no more than idleness and stupidity, all men practically would be idle and stupid." "Men's capacities," we are reminded, "are practically unequal, because they develop their own potential inequalities ; they do this because they desire to place themselves in unequal external circumstances,—which result the condition of society renders possible."

Coming now to the Science of Human Character itself, we find that it "asserts a permanent relationship to exist between human character and social inequality"; and the author then proceeds at some length to show how near Herbert Spencer, Buckle, and other social and economic philosophers, came to stumbling over his missing science, and yet avoided doing so. Nevertheless, argues Mr. Mallock, "if there be such a thing as a social science, or a science of history, there must be also a science of biography"; and this science, though it "cannot show us how any special man will act in the future," yet, if "any special action be given us, it can show us that it was produced by a special motive; and conversely, that if the special motive be wanting, the special action is sure to be wanting also." As an example of how to distinguish between those traits of human character which are available for scientific purposes, and those which are not, Mr. Mallock instances a mob, which temporarily acts together for some given purpose: the individual differences of character then "cancel out," and only points of agreement are left. Proceeding to the sixth chapter, he applies himself to setting to rest the scruples of those who find something cynical in the idea that the desire for Inequality is compatible with a respectable form of human character. It is true, he says, that man does not live by bread alone; but he denies that he means to say "that all human activity is motived by the desire for inequality"; he would assert that only "of all productive labor, except the lowest." The only actions independent of the desire for inequality, however, are those performed in the name of art, science, philanthropy, and religion; and even in these cases, so far as the actions are not motived by a desire for inequality, they are not of productive use; and *vice versa*. In the remaining chapters, which we must dismiss briefly, we meet with such statements as "labor has been produced by an artificial creation of want of food, and by then supplying the want on certain conditions"; that "civilization has always been begun by an oppressive minority"; that "progress depends on certain gifted individuals," and therefore social equality would destroy progress; that inequality

influences production by existing as an object of desire and as a means of pressure ; that the evils of poverty are caused by want, not by inequality ; and that, finally, equality is not the goal of progress, but of retrogression ; that inequality is not an accidental evil of civilization, but the cause of its development ; the distance of the poor from the rich is not the cause of the former's poverty as distinct from riches, but of their civilized competence as distinct from barbarism ; and that the apparent changes in the direction of equality recorded in history, have been, in reality, none other than "a more efficient arrangement of inequalities."

Now, let us inquire what all this ingenious prattle about Inequality and the Science of Human Character amounts to. What does Mr. Mallock expect ? His book has been out six months, and still Democracy exists. But does any such Democracy as he combats exist, or could it conceivably exist ? Have his investigations of the human character failed to inform him that one of the strangest natural instincts of man's nature is immovably opposed to any thing like an equal distribution of existing wealth ?—because whoever owns any thing, if it be only a coat, wishes to keep it ; and that wish makes him aware that his fellow-man will wish to keep, and will keep at all hazards, whatever things belong to him. What Democrats really desire is to enable all men to have an equal chance to obtain wealth, instead of being, as is largely the case now, hampered and kept down by all manner of legal and arbitrary restrictions. As for the "desire for Inequality," it seems to exist chiefly in Mr. Mallock's imagination. Who does desire it ? Does the man who "strikes" for higher wages desire it ? Let us see. A strike, to be successful, must be not an individual act, but the act of a large body of men, all demanding the same thing—an increase in wages. If they gain their end, no difference has taken place in their mutual position ; and their position in regard to their employers is altered only in that an approach has been made toward greater equality with the latter. And as in other departments of human effort : the aim, which the man who wishes to better his position sets before himself, is not to rise head and

shoulders above his equals, but to equal his superiors. And as to the Socialist schemes for the reorganization of society, they imply, at most, a wish to see all men start fair in the race of life, the only advantage allowed being not those of rank or station, but solely of innate capacity. And the reason the Socialist desires this is, because he believes, rightly or wrongly, that many inefficient men are, at present, only artificially protected from betraying their inefficiency ; and that many efficient men are only artificially prevented from showing their efficiency ; and that the fair start he proposes would not result in keeping all men on a dead level, but would simply put those in command who had a genuine right to be there.

But this is taxing Mr. Mallock too seriously : he has not written in earnest. But, as his uncle, Mr. Froude, said, when reading "The New Republic,"—"The rogue is clever!" He has read a good deal, he has an active mind, a smooth redundancy of expression, a talent for caricature, a fondness for epigram and paradox, a useful shallowness, and an amusing impudence. He has no practical knowledge of mankind, no experience of life, no commanding point of view, and no depth of insight. He has no conception of the meaning and quality of the problems with whose exterior aspects he so prettily trifles. He has constructed a Science of Human Character without for one moment being aware that, for instance, human character and human nature are two distinct things ; and that, furthermore, the one is every thing that the other is not. As little is he conscious of the significance of the words "society" and "civilization" ; nor can he explain whether, or why, either of them is desirable or undesirable, good or bad. He has never done, and (judging from his published works) we do not believe him capable of doing, any analytical or constructive thinking ; at most, as in the present volume, he turns a few familiar objects upside down, and airily invites his audience to believe that he has thereby earned the name of Discoverer, if not of Creator.

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